Utah Program Improvement Planning System (UPIPS) EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF REPORT NUAMES January 10, 2007

The attached report contains the results of the first two phases (Self-Assessment Process and On-Site Validation Visit) of the Utah Special Education Program Improvement Planning System (UPIPS). This Continuous Improvement Monitoring Process is conducted by the Utah State Office of Education (USOE) Special Education Services (SES), as required by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Part B. The process is designed to focus resources on improving results for students with disabilities through enhanced partnerships between charter school and district programs, USOE-SES, the Utah Personnel Development Center, parents, and advocates.

The first phase of this process included the completion of the Self-Assessment and the development of a Program Improvement Plan. The second phase, On-Site Validation, conducted in NUAMES on December 5-6, 2006, included student record reviews, interviews with school administrators, teachers, students, and parents, and classroom observations. Parent surveys were also mailed to a small sample of parents. Information from these data sources was shared in an exit meeting attended by staff from NUAMES.

This report contains a more complete description of the process utilized to collect data and to determine strengths, areas out of compliance with the requirements of IDEA, and recommendations for improvement in each of the core IDEA areas.

Areas of Strength

The validation team found the following:

General Supervision

- Willingness of NUAMES to improve and partner with parents.
- Student progress is tracked by NUAMES special education staff.
- Procedures in place to ensure that student records remain confidential.
- Strong administrator knowledge of special education laws and requirements.
- Special education teachers have small caseloads.
- Principal of NUAMES meets individually with each special education student and knows their needs.
- NUAMES has developed a collaborative relationship with Weber and Davis School Districts.
- Ongoing collaboration between special education staff and general education teachers at each NUAMES site.

Parent Involvement

- Parents know their rights and responsibilities.
- Parents report being satisfied with the special education services provided by the paraeducator.
- Parents state they are pleased with the overall school program.
- School staff are knowledgeable of Procedural Safeguards.
- Parents report that Procedural Safeguards are explained at meetings.
- Parent signatures were documented on student IEPS and Evaluation Summary/Eligibility Determination forms

Free Appropriate Public Education in the Least Restrictive Environment

- Mainstreaming of students with disabilities with their peers is prevalent.
- Parents report general education teachers present at IEP meetings.
- IEP Present Level of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance (PLAAFP) statements contained baseline data.
- Accommodations are being provided in the general education classroom.
- Students with disabilities are allowed to participate in elective classes through their local school district.
- NUAMES has few disciplinary issues.
- Students with disabilities access the general curriculum, which is documented with IEPs.

Transitions

- All students receive counseling on post-school options.
- Parents indicate that students are receiving training for employment and college.

There is a strong school focus on college and job training as part of the NUAMES mission.

Disproportionality

- There were no findings of disproportionality at NUAMES.
- School ethnicity and disability rates are comparable to state rates and charter school enrollment.
- NUAMES reported no suspensions/expulsions for longer than 10 days during the 2005-2006 school year.

Areas of Systemic Noncompliance*

- ▼ Notice of Meetings missing for IEP meetings and Placement review.
- ✔ Reevaluation timelines exceeded.
- ✓ Evaluation & Eligibility: Reevaluations did not include the use of Review of Existing Data, Evaluation Procedures not followed, and Evaluation Summary Report missing.
- ✓ IEP timelines exceeded.
- ✓ Team membership for IEP meetings did not include parents.
- ✓ IEP: Present Level of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance (PLAAFP) statements did not include how the disability affects involvement/progress in the general curriculum, did not contain specific special education services, and did not address how the student will participate in state-wide assessments.
- ✔ Placement decision reasons not documented.
- ✓ IEP goals do not address transition needs for students age 15 and older.

^{*}These areas represent items where the visiting team could not locate appropriate documentation of requirements of IDEA 2004 and Utah State Special Education Rules in student records or other data sources.